

IN THE CLAIMS:

For the Examiner's convenience, the pending claims are listed below:

1. (Original) A method of manufacturing a polymer comprising:
passing a block copolymerization product through a first devolatilizer operated at a first low pressure to form a once devolatilized copolymer; and
passing said once devolatilized block copolymer product from said first devolatilizer to a conduit.
2. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1 further including passing said once devolatilized block copolymer product from said conduit into a second devolatilizer to form a twice devolatilized block copolymer.
3. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 2 wherein said first devolatilizer is operated at a lower processing temperature than said second devolatilizer.
4. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 3 wherein said first devolatilizer is operated at a temperature of about 145°F and said second devolatilizer is operated at a temperature of about 300°F.
5. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 2 wherein said second devolatilizer is operated at a second low pressure wherein said second low pressure is less than said first low pressure.
6. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 5 wherein said pressure of said first devolatilizer ranges from about 20 Torr to about 200 Torr and said pressure of said second devolatilizer is equal to or less than about 20 Torr.
7. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said passing includes passing said block copolymerization product comprising:
a monovinyl aromatic homopolymer block;
a conjugated diene block;

a random conjugated diene-monovinylic aromatic rubber block; and
a monovinyl-substituted aromatic homopolymer block.

8. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said passing said once devolatilized block copolymer includes passing to a pelletizer to form an end product.

9. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 8 wherein passing said once devolatilized block includes passing through an extruder prior to passing said once devolatilized block copolymer product to said pelletizer.

10. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said pressure of said first devolatilizer ranges from about 200 Torr to less than about 20 Torr.

11. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said passing said once devolatilized block copolymer maximizes foam formation.

12. (Original) A method of manufacturing a block copolymer comprising:
passing a block copolymerization product through a first devolatilizer operated at a first low temperature to form a once devolatilized block copolymer product;
passing said once devolatilized block copolymer product from said first devolatilizer to a second devolatilizer operated at a second low temperature to form a twice devolatilized block copolymer product.

13. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 12 wherein said first low temperature is less than said second low temperature.

14. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said first low temperature is about 145°F and said second low temperature is about 300°F.

15. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 12 wherein a pressure of said first devolatilizer ranges from about 20 Torr to about 200 Torr and a pressure of said second devolatilizer is equal to or less than about 20 Torr.

16. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 12 wherein said passing includes passing said block copolymerization product, comprising:

- a monovinyl aromatic homopolymer block;
- a conjugated diene block;
- a random conjugated diene-monovinylic aromatic rubber block; and
- a monvinyl-substituted aromatic homopolymer block.

17. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 12 wherein said passing said once devolatilized block copolymer includes passing said twice devolatilized block copolymer product to a pelletizer to form an end product.

18. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 17 wherein passing said once devolatilized block copolymer includes passing said twice devolatilized block copolymer product through an extruder prior to passing said twice devolatilized block copolymer product to said pelletizer.

19. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 12 wherein said passing said block copolymer product through said first and second devolatilizers maximizes foam formation.